Getting Back to Basics:
How to support Home-Schooling during Covid 19 Lockdown

1. TEENAGERS NEED ROUTINE AND STRUCTURE
Try to have a REGULAR MORNING/BEDTIME ROUTINE in the week.
Make sure that the teenager is getting UP and OUT OF THEIR PYJAMAS everyday
Create a STUDY PLAN and COLOUR CODE this to include time for RELAXATION, DOWNTIME and FUN. Make sure that the REWARDS for any efforts they make with learning at home are EXPLICIT
Use SYMBOLS and PICTURES on the plan. Put it somewhere they can see it!
Keep home-schooling times short– if it starts off achievable then this will be maintained!

*THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO STICK TO A STUDY PLAN IF THEY MAKE THESE THEMSELVES*

2. CREATE A QUIET STUDY SPACE
Make sure the space is COMFORTABLE, CLEAN, AND TIDY. Make sure it is NOT THEIR BED! A desk in their room or elsewhere in the house is better.
Check LIGHTING, TEMPERATURE AND LIKELIHOOD OF INTERRUPTIONS e.g. DOORS THAT OPEN AND CLOSE OFTEN, LOUD TV/MUSIC FROM ANOTHER ROOM, SIBLINGS PLAYING, and the TELEPHONE RINGING

*REMOVE OBVIOUS VISUAL/AUDITORY DISTRACTIONS E.G. MOBILE PHONES/TABLETS/MUSIC WHILST THEY ARE STUDYING.

3. KEEP STUDY EQUIPMENT CLOSE
Make sure they can access pens, rulers, calculators, rubbers, highlighters, post it notes if needed.
NOISE CANCELLING HEADPHONES might help to filter out external noises and Help them to FOCUS more on tasks.

MAKE SURE THEY HAVE HYDRATING DRINKS AND SNACKS TO MOTIVATE THEM WITH STUDYING.

4. MAKE REGULAR SLEEP A HABIT
To learn effectively the teenager needs to be getting at least 8 hours UNINTERRUPTED SLEEP a night. SLEEP is essential for recharging, and helping with learning as sleep will improve memory, focus, and positive mental health!

*SLEEP IMPROVES LEARNING AND MEMORY AND DECREASES ANXIETY*

4. DAILY EXERCISE
Remember to take EVERY opportunity for exercise –have a walk/bike ride/ run FOR AT LEAST 30MINS A DAY if you can.

*EXERCISE will improve the teenager’s ABILITY TO LEARN and make them HAPPY and FIT*

5. EAT HEALTHY FOOD AND TRY TO KEEP TO A BALANCED DIET
HEALTHY FOODS LIKE FRESH FRUIT and VEGETABLES WILL HELP WITH BRAIN FUNCTION AND MEMORY
Perhaps let the teenager CREATE A HEALTHY MENU for the day or week, or HELP COOK/PREPARE FOOD one night.
**FOOD IS A GREAT MOTIVATOR DURING LOCKDOWN—TAKE PHOTOS OR MAKE FUNNY VIDEOS OF YOUR COOKING OR RECIPES TO SHARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA WITH FRIENDS / CREATE YOUR OWN ‘LOCKDOWN COOKBOOK’**

6. **BE CREATIVE** with LEARNING APPROACHES
E.G Practice making a MIND-MAP, AN AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING, or a 3D MODEL linked to subject they are interested in—e.g. Mind-Map famous tall buildings around the world, AUDIO record the teenager talking about their favourite film and why they like it, make a 3D model of the solar system using string and cut out cardboard

* USE THIS TIME TO DEVELOP AND MASTER STRATEGIES THAT WILL BE USEFUL TO THEIR LEARNING IN THE FUTURE

7. **KEEP MENTALLY STIMULATED WITH LOTS OF INTERACTIVE /FAMILY WORD GAMES**
Link VOCABULARY GAMES to the teenager’s own INTEREST or to WORLD EVENTS. They are more likely to learn if it is something that INTERESTS THEM OR IF IT SOMETHING THEY CAN RELATE TO!

E.G Play games like Word Association/Category games where they have to think of something that begins with same letter. What COUNTRY AM I / WHICH FAMOUS PERSON AM I –These games are always fun and easy to play as you don’t need much equipment.

*PLAYING GAMES BETWEEN HOME-SCHOOLING TASKS WILL MOTIVATE THE TEENAGER EVEN MORE FOR LEARNING AS IT CAN BE A USEFUL BREAK

8. **STAY POSITIVE THESE ARE DIFFICULT TIMES**
Keep a GRATITUDE BOX in the house where at the end of the day you and your teenager can write one ACTIVITY YOU DID THAT WAS ENJOYABLE that day, or have been grateful for and put this in the box. Read these out to each other at the end of the week.

Practice MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES that help you be in the moment and relax. Add other things that might help with being calm and relaxed e.g. Listen to relaxing/soothing music, planting and gardening, colouring and drawing, going for a short walk.

*REMEMBER TO HAVE REGULAR SENSORY BREAKS WHEN HOME-SCHOOLING –WHERE THEY CAN STAND UP, LEAVE THE ROOM, AND GO OUTSIDE INTO THE FRESH AIR!

9. **BE REALISTIC—ONE THING AT A TIME**
Teenagers find it hard to multi task, keep tasks manageable and try not to expect too much.

*DON’T BE HARD ON YOURSELF! LESS IS MORE!

10. **BE THEIR ROLE MODEL. BE AVAILABLE.**

Adults can plan, structure and organise, there will be days where the teenager just doesn’t want to do it! Tell them that this is ok!

*APPRECIATE THIS TIME YOU HAVE AND THE CHANGE IN LIFESTYLE AND PACE. TREAT THIS TIME AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH YOUR TEENAGER CONNECT WITH THEM.

**Resources from Study Skills for students with SLCN: Bhaveshi Kumar**
*Create a Study Timetable/Make a Healthy Habits Poster/How to make a Mind-Map/Mindfulness with an Orange